

كتاب فحول الشعراء
للأصمعيّ

تحقيق
ش. تورّي

قدّم لها
الدكتور صلاح الدين المنجد

دار الكتاب الجديد

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الطبعة الأولى
حقوق الطبع محفوظة
١٣٨٩ هـ - ١٩٧١ م

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مقدمة

- ١ -

ما زال العلماء منذ ظهور الإسلام حتى يومنا يهتمون بالشعر القديم وينقدونه ، ويحفظونه ، ويشرحونه ، ويقلّدونه ، والرسالة التي أقدم لها تمثل لونا من هذا الاهتمام . فقد تضمنت آراء الأصمعي ، العالم والناقد واللغوي والراوي ، في فحولة طائفة من الشعراء الجاهليين والإسلاميين ، رواها عنه تلميذه أبو حاتم سهل ابن محمد بن عثمان السجزي ، ورواها عن أبي حاتم تلميذه ابن دريد اللغوي .

لا نجد في الرسالة تفسيراً واضحاً لمعنى « فحولة » الشاعر . فقد سأل أبو حاتم أستاذه الأصمعي عن معنى « الفحل » ، فقال : من كان له مزية على غيره ، كمزية الفحل على الحقائق . (ج . حق) ، من الإبل ، الداخلة في السنة الرابعة) . على أننا نجد في اللسان ما يلي : « فحولة الشعراء هم الذين غلبوا بالهجاء من هاجاهم ، مثل جرير والفرزدق وأشباههما ، وكذلك كل من عارض شاعراً فغلب عليه » . لكن هذا التعريف يبدو ناقصاً ، لأننا نجد الأصمعي في رسالته يصف بعض الشعراء بالفحولة لغير ما ذكره « اللسان » . فقد قال إن « طفيلًا فحل » لأنه غاية ، في النعت وإن كعب بن سعد الغنوي ليس من الفحول إلا في المروية ، فإنه ليس في الدنيا مثلها ، وإن لبيداً ليس بفحل ، وإن شعره كأنه طيلسان طبري ، يعني أنه جيد الصنعة وليست له حلالة ، وإن الحويدرة لو قال خمس قصائد مثل قصيدته كان فحلاً ... ، ومن هذا نرى أن الأصمعي كان ينظر في الفحولة إلى جودة السبك ، وبراعة المعنى ، ووفرّة الشعر معاً .

وتبدو قيمة الرسالة في أنها جمعت عدداً كبيراً من الشعراء الجاهليين والإسلاميين ، وأن الأصمعي نفسه كان له شأن كبير ، نظراً لمكانته في تاريخنا اللغوي والأدبي .

وُلد الأصمعيّ - وهو عبد الملك بن قُريّيب بن عبد الملك . . . بن أصم ، وإليه نسبته - في البصرة سنة ثلاث وعشرين ومائة من الهجرة . وكانت البصرة يومئذ تجتمع العلماء والشعراء والأدباء . فلما شبّ أخذ القراءات واللغة والأدب على أبي عمرو بن العلاء ، أحد القراء السبعة . وأخذ عن طائفة العلماء منهم الخليل ابن أحمد الفراهيدي ، والإمام جعفر الصادق ، وحماد عجرد ، وحماد بن سلمة ، وحماد بن زيد وهما محدثان ، وخلف الأحمر ، وسفيان بن عُيينة ، وآخرون . ولقي عدداً كبيراً من الشعراء الفصحاء ، وأولادهم ، وسمع منهم أشعارهم . ثم إنه عني بأمر لم يُعْنَ به أحدٌ مثله هو السماع من الأعراب ، وأهل البادية ، فكان يحفظ ما يسمعه منهم . فاجتمع له من رواية الشعر ما لم يجتمع لغيره ، وكان يفخر بهذه الميزة التي أوتيتها . وكان يملك إلى ذلك كله ، عدداً ضخماً من الكتب ، يُطالع فيها . خرج مرة مع الرشيد إلى الرقة فحمل معه ثمانية عشر صندوقاً من الكتب ، وذكر أنه خفف الحمل ، ولو ثقله لحمل أضاف ذلك . وهذا يدلّ على ما كان عنده من الكتب .

اشتهر الأصمعيّ بروايته الواسعة ، ومعرفته بالشعر ونقده ، وبالتفسير والحديث والنحو ، وكذلك اشتهر بحفظه وقوة ذاكرته ، وعُرف عنه الذكاء واستحضار الحجة ، وخفة الروح ، وظرف النادرة ، وحلاوة المزاج ، ولذع التهكم . وقد امتلأت كتب أدبنا العربي بالرواية عنه ، أو ذكر أخباره ، حتى ما تكاد تلقى كتاباً من المصادر الكبيرة ، لا ذكر له فيها . لقد كان من العلماء النواذر الذين أغنوا الأدب العربي ، وساعدوا على توضيح معالمه .

ألّف الاصمعيّ كتباً كثيرة ، أورد صاحب الفهرست مسرداً بها^(١) ، وفاته بعضها ، وهذا بيان ما جمعناه من أسماء مؤلفاته :

(١) الفهرست (ط. أوروبا) ص ٥٥ - ٥٦ .

٢٧ - جزيرة العرب	١ - خلق الانسان
٢٨ - الدلو	٢ - الاجناس
٢٩ - الرحل	٣ - الأنواء
٣٠ - معاني الشعر	٤ - الهمز
٣١ - مصادر	٥ - المقصود والممدود
٣٢ - القصائد الست	٦ - الفرق
٣٣ - الاراجيز	٧ - الصفات
٣٤ - النخلة	٨ - الاثواب
٣٥ - النبات والشجر	٩ - الميسر والقдах
٣٦ - الحراج	١٠ - خلق الفرس
٣٧ - ما اتفق لفظه واختلف معناه	١١ - الخيل
٣٨ - غريب الحديث	١٢ - الابل
٣٩ - السرج واللجام والشوى والنعال	١٣ - الشاء
٤٠ - غريب الحديث والكلام الوحشي	١٤ - الاخبية والبيوت
٤١ - نوادر الاعراب	١٥ - الوحوش وصفاتها
٤٢ - مياه العرب	١٦ - الأوقات
٤٣ - النسب	١٧ - فعل وأفعل
٤٤ - الاصوات	١٨ - الامثال
٤٥ - المذكر والمؤنث	١٩ - الأضداد
٤٦ - الاصمعيات	٢٠ - الالفاظ
٤٧ - الدارات	٢١ - السلاح
٤٨ - النخل والكرم	٢٢ - اللغات
٤٩ - أسماء الخمر	٢٣ - الاشتقاق
٥٠ - ما تكلم به العرب فكثرت في	٢٤ - النوادر
أفواه الناس	٢٥ - أصول الكلام
٥١ - فحولة الشعراء	٢٦ - القلب والابدال

هذا ما جمعناه من مؤلفاته. وما أثبت منها بحرف أسود هو المطبوع منها^(١).

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والعجيب أن رسالة «فحولة الشعراء» لم يذكرها صاحب الفهرست، ولا الذين كتبوا عن الأصمعي في عصرنا، كعز الدين التنوخي، والزركلي، وكحالة، وسركيس، مع أنها طُبعت منذ أمد طويل. وهي ذات شأن كبير، وتستحق الدراسة العميقة.

وقد كان المستشرق تشارلس تورّي قد نشر هذه الرسالة في عام ١٩١١ في المجلد ٦٥ من مجلة جمعية المستشرقين الألمان. مع ترجمة إنكليزية، ويبدو أن أبناء العربية لم يطلعوا عليها، ولم يفيدوا منها في دراساتهم عن الشعر القديم.

والمستشرق تورّي كان أستاذًا في جامعة ييل Yale بالولايات المتحدة، وقد نشر عددًا من النصوص العربية، منها «فتوح مصر وإفريقية والمغرب» لابن عبد الحكم، و«اغلاط الضعفاء» لابن برّي، وفحولة الشعراء للأصمعي، وغير ذلك، وتوفى سنة ١٩٤٨ هـ، وكان مولده سنة ١٨٦٣ م.

— ٥ —

روى هذه الرسالة كتابةً عن الأصمعي تلميذه أبو حاتم السجستاني، وهو سهل ابن محمد. كان من كبار علماء البصرة باللغة والشعر. وقد نحى نحو أستاذه الأصمعي في مؤلفاته الكثيرة، وكان ثقة. توفى سنة ٢٤٨ هـ. وكان من تلاميذه ابن دريد اللغوي المتوفى سنة ٣٢١ هـ، وهو الذي روى عنه رسالتنا هذه. فتكون الرسالة قد وصلت إلينا بطريق عالين كبيرين ثقتين عن الأصمعي.

صلاح الدين المنجد

بيروت، ١٩٧١

(١) للتوسع في ترجمة الأصمعي أنظر: عز الدين التنوخي، الأصمعي، في مجلة المجمع العلمي العربي بدمشق، المجلد ١٤ (١٩٣٦) ص ٨٣ - ١١٠؛ وكحالة، معجم المؤلفين ٦ / ١٨٧؛ والزركلي، الأعلام ٤ / ٣٠٧؛ ونزهة الألباء ص ١١٢ (طبعة محمد أبو الفضل إبراهيم، وما ذكره من المصادر)؛ وبروكلمن، المجلد الأول ٧٦٣، والذيل الأول ١٠٤.

كتاب فحول الشعراء

رواية ابن دريد عن أبي حاتم عن الأصمعي

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم قال أبو بكر محمد بن الحسن بن
دريد الأزدي قال أبو حاتم سهل بن محمد بن عثمان السجزي
سمعت الأصمعي عبد الملك بن قريظ غير¹⁾ مرة يفضل النابغة
الذبياني على سائر شعراء²⁾ للجاهلية وسأله آخر ما سأله فبيد
موته من أول الفحول قال النابغة الذبياني ثم قال ما أرى في الدنيا
لأحد مثلك قول امرئ القيس

وَقَافِمُ جَدُّهُمْ بَيْنِي أَيْبَهُمْ وَبِالْأَشَقَيْنِ مَا كَانَ الْعِقَابُ³⁾

قال أبو حاتم فلما رآني أكتب كلامه فكر ثم قال بل أولهم⁴⁾
كلهم في الجودة امرؤ القيس له الخطوة والسبق وكلهم أخذوا من
قوله واتبعوا مذهبه وكأنه جعل النابغة الذبياني من الفحول قال
أبو حاتم قلت ما معنى الفحل قال يريد أن له مزية على غيره
كمزية الفحل على الخفاف قال وبيد جريير يدلك على هذا

وابن اللبون إذا ما لَزَّ⁴⁾ في قرآنٍ لَمْ يَسْتَضِعْ صَوْلَةَ ابْنِزِلِ الْقَنَاعِيسِ⁵⁾

قال أبو حاتم وسأله رجل أي الناس طرأ أشعر قال النابغة قال
تقدم عليه أحدا قال لا ولا أدركت العلماء بالشعر يفضلون عليه
أحدا قلت فزهير بن أبي سلمى قد اختلف فيه وفيهما⁶⁾ ثم قال
لا قال أبو عمرو وسأله رجل وأنا اسمع النابغة أشعر أم زهير فقال
ما يصلح زهير أن يكون أجيرا للنابغة قال [و] أوس⁶⁾ بن حجر أشعر²⁰⁾

1) Ms. عن.

2) Ms. الشعراء.

3) Ablwardt, *Diras* I, 120; Agh. VIII, 69; Cheikho, *Šu'arā' an-Naṣrā-nīya* I, 17, etc.

4) Ms. قنيس. The verse cited in *Lisān* s. v. لَزَّ and لَزَّ.

5) The text of this passage is queried by the copyist, and كَذَا is inserted here in Landberg's hand.

6) So corrected in Ms.

من زهير ولكن النابغة طأطأ منه قال أوس

جَيْشٍ تَرَى مِنْهُ الْفَصَاءَ مَعْصِلًا¹⁾

في قافية وقال النابغة فجاء بمعناه في نصف بيت وزاد شيئاً آخر
فقال (fol. 2)

جَيْشٍ²⁾ يَظُلُّ بِهِ الْفَصَاءَ مَعْصِلًا يَدْعُ الْإِكَامَ كَأَنَّهُنَّ فَكَارِي 5

قال أبو حاتم حدثنا الأصمعي قال حدثنا شيخ من أهل نجد
قال كان طُفَيْلُ الْغَنَوِيِّ يَسْمَى فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مُحِبًّا لِحَسَنِ شَعْرِهِ قَالَ
وطفيل عندي في بعض شعره اشعر من امرئ القيس الأصمعي يقول
ثم قال وقد أخذ طفيل من امرئ القيس شيئاً قال ويقال أن كثيراً
10 من شعر امرئ القيس لصعاليك كانوا معه قال وكان عمرو بن قُمَيْمَةَ³⁾
دخل معه الروم إلى قيصر قال وكان معوية بن أبي سفيان يقول
دعوا لي طفيلاً فإن شعره أشبه بشعر الأولين من زهير وهو فحل
ثم قال من العجب أن النابغة لم ينعت فرساً قط بشيء إلا قوله

صَفْرًا مَنَاخِرُهَا مِنَ الْجَرَّارِ⁴⁾

15 قال ولم يكن النابغة وأوس وزهير يحسنون صفة الخيل ولكن طفيل
غاية في النعت وهو فحل ثم انشد له

يُرَادُ⁵⁾ عَلَى فَأْسٍ الْإِلْهَامَ كَأَنَّمَا يُرَادُ⁶⁾ بِهِ مِرْقَانَةٌ جَذَعٌ مُشَدَّبٌ

1) Cf. the verse quoted from this poet in *Lisān* XIII, 478.

2) Ahlw., *Divans*, p. 14 has جَمْعًا Diw. Cairo 1293 (with Comm. of Baṭalyūsī), p. 37 has جَمْعٌ. On this verse see also Ibn as-Sikkīt, p. 343.

3) Ms. قَمَيْمَةُ.

4) Ahlw. p. 14; Diw. Cairo 1293, p. 38, and elsewhere.

5) Elsewhere always يُرَادِي or تُرَادِي; see Krenkow, "Tufail al-Ganawī", JRAS. 1907, p. 852 (vs. 45), and the references given by him, pp. 825, 827.

قوله يراد على فاس اللجام تقول راودته على كذا أى حاولته عليه
ويقال أردته أيضا وإنما يصف عنقه¹⁾

. . . . وهو جيد الصفة للمخيل جدًا ثم انشد

يشدّ الشُّور، أو أراد ليَزفرا²⁾

وقد احسن في قصيدته انتهى يقول فيها

تلك المكارم لا قعبار³⁾ من لبن شيبا بماء فعادا بعد أبوالا⁴⁾

قلت ما مذهبه في ذا فإن هذا البيت يدخل في شعر غيره⁵⁾ قال
لما قال سوار ابن الحياء القشيري ومنا ناشد رجله ومنا الذى اسر
حاجبا ومنا الذى سقى اللبن قال النابغة حينئذ (fol. 3)

تلك المكارم لا قعبار من لبن

قال الأصمعي لو كانت هذه القصيدة للنابغة الأكبر بلغت كل
مبلغ قلت فالاعشى اعشى بنى قيس بن ثعلبة قال ليس بفحل
قلت فعلقمة بن عبدة قال فحل قلت فالحرث بن حنزة قال فحل
قلت فعمرو بن كلثوم قال ليس بفحل قلت فالمسيب بن علس
قال فحل قلت فعدي بن زيد فحل هو قال ليس بفحل ولا انشئ¹⁵⁾
قال أبو حاتم وإنما سألته لأنى سمعت ابن مناذر لا يقدم عليه
احدا قلت فحسار بن ثابت قال فحل قلت فقيس بن الحظيم قال

1) In the Ms. there is no sign of a gap here, nor does any one appear to have noticed it. It is plain that from speaking of Ṭufail's description of horses al-Aṣmaʿī then passed on to speak of his acknowledged rival in this regard, Nābigha Ja'dī. The place where the omission occurred must be the one which I have indicated, and it may be that the text has suffered the loss of only a line or two.

2) The verse appears to come from the long *qaṣīda* of this poet of which small portions are given in Agh. IV, 130 f., Hiz. I, 513 f., and elsewhere, while 70 or 80 verses from it appear in the Jamhara, 145 ff. A similar verse (but not the same) is Jamh. 147, 4.

3) Ms. قُعبار.

4) See especially Brockelmann in *Nöldeke-Festschrift* I, 118.

5) Landberg's copyist queries the line beginning with this word and ending with ومنا.

فحل قلت فالمرقشاه قال فحلا. قلت فابن قميثة¹⁾ قال فحل قال
هو قميثة¹⁾ بن سعد بن مالك وكنيته أبو يزيد قلت فابو زبيد²⁾
قال ليس بفحل قلت فالشماخ قال فحل قال الاصمعي واخبرني من
راى قبر الشماخ بأرمينية قلت فمزرك اخوه قال ليس بدون الشماخ
5 ولكنه افسد شعره بما يهجو الناس³⁾ قال واخبرني الاصمعي
قبل هذا ان اهل الكوفة لا يقدمون على الاعشى احدا قال وكان
خلف لا يقدم عليه احدا قال ابو حاتم لانه قد قال في كل عروض
وركب كل قافية⁴⁾ قلت فعروة بن الورد قال شاعر كريم وليس بفحل
قلت فالجويدرة⁴⁾ قال لو قال مثل قصيدته خمس قصائد كان فحلا
10 قلت فمهلهل قال ليس بفحل ولو كان قال مثل قوله

أَيْلَنْتَنَا بِذِي جُشَمٍ⁵⁾ إِنِّي رَى

كان أفلحهم قال واكثر شعره محمول عليه قلت فابو دؤاد⁶⁾ قال صالح
لم يقل انه فحل قلت فالراعى قال ليس بفحل قلت فابن مقبل
قال ليس بفحل قال ابو حاتم وسألت الاصمعي من اشعر الراعى
15 ام ابن مقبل قال ما اقربهما قلت لا يقنعنا هذا قال الراعى اشبه
شعرا بالنقديم وبالأول قلت فابن احمر (fol. 4) الباعلى قال ليس
بفحل ولكن دون هؤلاء وفوق طبقتة قال وارى ان مالك بن حريم
الهمداني من الفحول قال ولو قال ثعلبة بن صعير المازنى مثل
قصيدته خمسا كان فحلا قلت فكعب بن جعيل قال اظنه من
الفحول ولا أستيقنه قلت فجير والفزق والاخلط قال هؤلاء لو
20 كانوا في الجاهلية كان لهم شأن ولا أقول فيهم شيئا لانهم اسلاميون

1) Ms. قمّة.

2) Ms. زبيد.

3) Apparently a leaf of one of the parent Mss. was misplaced, for this passage plainly belongs above, after the statement that al-A'sā was not a *fahl*.

4) Ms. فالجويدرة.

5) Better حَسَمَ or حَسَمَ; Nöldeke, *Del. Carm.* p. 44, *Lisān* s. v. حسم, etc.

6) Ms. دؤاد.

قال ابو حاتم وكنت اسمعه يفضل جريرا على الفرزدق كثيرا فقلت له يوم¹⁾ دخل عليه عصام بن الفيض انى اريد ان اسألك عن شىء ولو ان عصاما يعلمه من قبلك لم اسألك ثم قالت سمعتك تفصل جريرا على الفرزدق غير مرة فما تقول فيهما وفي الاخطل فاطرف ساعة ثم انشد بيتا من قصيدته²⁾

لَعَمْرِي لَقَدْ أَسْرَيْتُ لَا لَيْلَ عَاجِزٍ بِسَاهِمَةٍ³⁾ اَلْحَدِيثِ طَاوِيَةِ الْقُرْبِ
فانشد ابياتا زهاء العشرة ثم قال من قال لك أن⁴⁾ في الدنيا احدا قال مثلها قبله ولا بعده فلا تصدقه ثم قال ابو عمرو بن العلاء كان يفضل سمعت ابا عمرو بن العلاء يقول لو ادرك الاخطل من الجاهلية يوما واحدا ما قدمت عليه جاهليا ولا اسلاميا ثم⁵⁾ قال الاصمعي انشدت ابا عمرو بن العلاء شعرا فقال ما يطيق هذا من الاسلاميين احد ولا الأخطل قال ابو حاتم وسألته عن الاغلب ائحل هو من الرجاز فقال ليس بفحل ولا مفلح وقد⁶⁾ اعياني شعرة وقال لى مرة ما اروى للأغلب⁷⁾ الا اثنتين ونصفا قلت كيف قلت نصفا قال اعرف له ثنتين وكنت اروى نصفا من التى على⁸⁾ القاف فطولوها ثم قال كان ولده يزيدون في شعرة حتى افسدها قال ابو حاتم وطلب منه اسحق بن العباس رجلا للأغلب⁹⁾ وطلب منى [....].¹⁰⁾ فاعرته¹¹⁾ فاخرج منها نحو من عشرين (fol. 5) فقلت الم تزعم انك لا تعرف له الا اثنتين ونصفا قال لى بلى ولكننى انتقيت¹²⁾ ما اعرف فان لم يكن له فهو لغيره ممن هو¹³⁾

1) The line of Landberg's Ms. beginning with this word is queried.

2) Dīwān, ed. Salhānī, p. 17, etc.

3) Ms. بساهمة.

4) Ms. أن.

5) Ms. للاصمعي.

6) Ms. وقال.

7) Ms. لا اغلب.

8) Ms. لاغلب.

9) Thus Landberg Ms.

10) Ms. فاعربه, corrected by Landberg's copyist.

11) Ms. اسعيت.

ثبت أو ثقة قال أبو حاتم وكان أروى الناس للمرجز الاصمعي قال أبو حاتم سمعت مرة تجرانياً كان قد ضاف بنواحي خراسان فسأله فقال أخبرني فلان بالرقى انك تروى اثنتي عشرة¹ ألف أرجوزة قال نعم أربعة عشرة² ألف أرجوزة أحفظها فتعجبت فقال لي أكثرها³ 5 قصار قلت أجعلها بيتا بيتا أربعة عشرة ألف بيت قال الاصمعي انما اعيانى شعر الاغلب قال خلف⁴ فكان من ولده انسان يصدق في الحديث والروايات ويكذب عليه في شعره قلت فحاتم الطائى قال حاتم انما يُعَدُّ بكرم ولم يقل انه فحل قلت فمُعَقَّرُ البارقي حليف بنى نُمَيْرٍ قال لو اتم خمسا او ستا لكان فحلا ثم قال لم ار اقل 10 شعرا من كلب وشيبان قلت فابو ذؤيب الهذلى قال فحل قلت فمساعدة بن جُوَيْة قال فحل قلت فابو خراش الهذلى قال فحل قلت فاعشى همدان قال هو من الفحول وهو اسلمى كثير الشعر وسالت الاصمعي عن كعب بن سعد الغنوى قال ليس من الفحول الا في المرثية فانه ليس في الدنيا مثلها قال وكان يقال له كعب 15 الأمثال وسألته عن خفاف ابن ندبة وعنتره والبرقان بن بدر قال هؤلاء اشعر الفرسان ومثلهم عباس بن مرداس السلمى لم يقل انهم من الفحول وبشر بن ابي خازم⁴ وسمعت ابا عمرو بن العلا يقول قصيدته التى على الرءاء ألحقته بالفحول

أَلَا بَانَ الْخَلِيطُ وَلَمْ يُدَانِي وَقَلْبُكَ فِي الظَّعَائِنِ مُسْتَعَارُ⁵

20 قلت فالاسود بن يعفر النهشلى قال يشبه الفحول قلت رأيت

1) Ms. عشرة. 2) Ms. أربع عشرة. 3) Ms. حلف.

4) Very often written حازم; thus e. g. Aghānī and Index, Yāqūt (see Index), Lane, *Lex.* s. v. عور, etc.

5) See Yāqūt I, 76, where the verse (in the recension of as-Sukkarī) is given in what appears to be the more primitive form, with بزاروا in place of يدانى. Yāqūt probably cites other portions of the same *qaṣida* in I, 393f., IV, 10, 47, 128, 480. So too, perhaps, the verse given in the *Lisān* and Lane s. v. عور.

عمرو بن شاس الأسدى ما قلت فيه¹⁾ (fol. 6) قال ليس بفحل هو دون هؤلاء قلت فلبيد بن ربيعة قال ليس بفحل وقال لى مرة اخرى كان رجلا صالحا كأنه ينفى عنه جودة الشعر وقال لى مرة شعر لبيد كأنه طيلسان²⁾ طبرى يعنى انه جيد الصنعة وليست له حلاوة قال وجرادة بن عَميلة العنزي له اشعار تشبه اشعار الفحول³⁾ وهى قصار وهذا البيت له

أَتَى أَهْتَدَيْتِ وَكُنْتَ غَيْرَ دَلِيلَةٍ شَهِدْتُ عَلَيْكِ بِمَا فَعَلْتَ شُهُوُ
قلت فأوس بن غلفاء الهجيمى قال لو كان قال عشرين قصيدة لحف بالفحول ولكنه قطع به قال وعميرة بن طارف اليربوعي من رؤوس الفرسان هو الذى اسر قابوس بن المُنْذِرَ وسألته عن خِداش¹⁰⁾ بن زهير العامري قال هو فحل قلت فكعب بن زهير بن ابي سلمى قال ليس بفحل قلت فزيد الخليل الطائى قال من الفرسان قلت فسليمان بن السلكة قال ليس من الفحول ولا من الفرسان ولكنه من الذين كانوا يَغْزُونَ فيَعْدُونَ على ارجلهم فيختلسون قال ومثله ابن بَرَاقة الهمداني ومثله حاجز التُمَالَى من السُرُويين وتَابَطُ شَرَأ¹⁵⁾ واسمه ثابت بن جابر والشنفرى الأزدي السُرُوى وليس المُنْتَشِرَ منهم ولكن الاعلم الهذلى منهم قال وبالحجاز منهم وبالسراة اكثر من ثلاثين يعنى الذين يعدون على ارجلهم ويختلسون قال وسلامة بن جندل لو كان زاد شيئا كان فحلا قال والمُتَمَلِّسُ راس فحول ربيعة قال ودريد بن الصمة من فحول الفرسان قال ودريد فى بعض²⁰⁾ شعره اشعر من الذبياني وكاد يغلب الذبياني قلت فاعشى باهلة امن الفحول هو قال نعم وله مَرثِيَةٌ ليس فى الدنيا مثلها وهى²⁾ اَتَى اَتَمَّنَى لِسَانٌ لَا أُسْرُ بِهَا مِنْ عَلَوُ لَا كَذِبٌ فِيهَا وَلَا سَخَرُ³⁾

1) Ms. منه.

3) Ms. سَخَرُ.

2) The whole poem, Jamh. 135 ff. This opening verse also cited, in somewhat varying form, in the larger native lexicons, s. v. علو.

(fol. 7) ¹⁾ قال وُلِدَ العَجَّاجُ فِي الجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَكَانَ حُمَيْدُ الْأَرْقُطِ يُشَدِّبُ الرِّجْزَ وَيَنْقَحُهُ وَيَنْقِيهِ قَالَ وَرَأَيْتُهُ يَسْتَجِيدُ بَعْضَ رَجَزِ أَبِي النِّجْمِ وَيَضَعُفُ بَعْضًا لِأَنَّهُ رَدِيثًا كَثِيرًا قَالَ مَرَّةً لَا يَعْجِبُنِي شَاعِرُ اسْمِهِ الْفَصْلُ بْنُ قُدَامَةَ يَعْنِي أَبَا النِّجْمِ قَالَ أَبُو حَاتِمٍ وَسَأَلْتُ الْأَصْمَعِي ⁵ عَنِ الْفُخَّيْفِ الْعَامِرِيِّ الَّذِي قَالَ فِي النِّسَاءِ قَالَ لَيْسَ بِفَصِيحٍ وَلَا حُجَّةٍ وَسَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ زِيَادِ الْأَعْجَمِ فَقَالَ حُجَّةٌ لَمْ يَتَعَلَّفْ عَلَيْهِ بَلْخَنَ وَكُنْيَتُهُ أَبُو أُمَامَةَ قُلْتُ فَاخْبِرْنِي عَنْ عَبْدِ بَنِي الْحُسَّاسِ قَالَ هُوَ فَصِيحٌ وَهُوَ زُجْجِي أَسْوَدٌ قَالَ وَأَبُو ²⁾ دَلَامَةَ عَبْدُ رَأَيْتُهُ مَوْلِدُ حَبْشِي قُلْتُ أَفْصِيحًا ³⁾ كَانَ قَالَ هُوَ صَالِحُ الْفَصَاحَةِ قَالَ وَأَبُو عَطَاءٍ السَّنْدِيُّ ¹⁰ عَبْدُ أَخْرَبٍ مُشَقَّقٌ الْأَنْثَنُ قُلْتُ أَوْ كَانَ ⁴⁾ فِي الْأَعْرَابِ قَالَ لَا وَلَكِنَّهُ فَصِيحٌ قَالَ عَبْدُ الْعَزِيزِ بْنُ مَرْوَانَ ⁵⁾ لَا يَمُنُّ بْنُ خَرِيمٍ ⁶⁾ الْأَسَدِيُّ كَيْفَ تَرَى ⁷⁾ مَوْلَايَ يَعْنِي نُصَيْبًا قَالَ هُوَ أَشْعَرُ أَهْلِ جَلْدَتِهِ وَكَانَ أَسْوَدَ قَالَ وَعَمْرُ بْنُ أَبِي رَبِيعَةَ مَوْلِدٌ وَهُوَ حُجَّةٌ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَمْرٍو بْنَ الْعَلَاءِ يَحْتَجُّ فِي الْخَوِ بِشَعْرَةٍ وَيَقُولُ هُوَ حُجَّةٌ وَفَضَالَةُ بْنُ شَرِيكَ الْأَسَدِيُّ ¹⁵ وَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الرَّبْرِ الْأَسَدِيُّ وَابْنُ الرُّقَيَّاتِ هَوْلَاءُ مَوْلِدُونَ وَشَعْرُهُمْ حُجَّةٌ وَرَأَيْتُهُ طَعَنَ فِي الْأَقْيِشْرِ وَلَمْ يَلْتَفِتْ إِلَى شَعْرَةٍ وَقَالَ وَلَا يَقَالُ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ شُرْطَى فَقُلْتُ قَالَ الْأَقْيِشَرُ ⁸⁾

إِنَّمَا يَشْرَبُ ⁹⁾ مِنْ أَمْوَالِنَا فَاسْأَلُوا الشُّرْطَى مَا هَذَا الْغَضَبُ

فَقَالَ ذَاكَ مَوْلِدُ قَالَ وَابْنُ هَرَمَةَ ¹⁰⁾ ثَبِتَ فَصِيحٌ قَالَ وَابْنُ أَثِينَةَ ²⁰ ثَبِتَ فِي طَبَقَةِ ابْنِ هَرَمَةَ وَهُوَ دُونُهُ فِي الشَّعْرِ وَقَدْ كَانَ مَالِكُ يَبْرُو

1) It is possible that something is missing here.

2) Ms. أبو.

3) Ms. أفصيح.

4) Ms. وكان.

5) Ms. مودت (sic).

6) Ms. خزيم, corrected (by Landberg?) to خزيم. Often written خزيم, see however Suyūfī, *Husn*, I, 79, also Agh. XXI, 7.

7) Ms. يرى.

8) Agh. X, 91.

9) So orig. Ms., but corrected by copyist to نشر. See note on the Translation.

10) Ms. هَرَمَةَ.

عنه الفقه قال وطفيل الكنانى مثل ابن هرمة قال ويزيد بن ضبة
مولى لتقيف قال قال يزيد بن ضبة ألف قصيدة فافتسها منها العرب
فذهبت بها قال الأصمعى لم يكن بعد روية وأبى (fol. 8) نُحَيْلَة
اشعر من جندل الطهوى وأبى طَوْفٍ وخطام الخجاشى ويلقب خطام
الريح قال وكان ابن مفرغ من مولدى البصرة قال حدثنى الأصمعى⁵
قال أخبرنى وهب بن جرير بن حازم قال قال أبى¹ كنت أروى
لأمية ثلاثمائة قصيدة قال فقلت أين كتابه قال استعاره فلان فذهب
به حدثنى الأصمعى قال كان يقال اشعر الناس مغلبو مضر حميد
والراعى وابن مقبل فالما الراعى فغلبه جرير وغلبه خنزر رجل من
بنى بكر ولجعدى غلبته ليلى الأخيلية وسوار ابن الحيا وابن مقبل¹⁰
غلبه الخجاشى من بنى لحرث بن كعب وحميد كل من هاجاه
غلبه قال ابن حجر لم يهاج احدا قال وفُسَحِمَ شاعر جاعلى مُقْلِف²
ولم ينسبه قال وكان الخجاشى بن الحارثية³ شرب الخمر فضربه على
بن أبى طالب رضة مائة سوط ثمانين للسكر وعشرين لحرمة رمضان
وكان وجده⁴ في رمضان سكران فلما ضربه ذهب الى معوية¹⁵
فمدحه * ونال من⁵ على رضة⁶ قال الأصمعى جامع [زهير]⁷ قوما
من يهود اى قاربهم فسمع بذكر المعاد فقال فى قصيدته
يُوَخَّرُ فَيُوضَعُ فى كِتَابٍ فَيُدْخَرُ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ أَوْ يُعْجَلُ فَيُنْقَمَ⁸

1) Ms. أبى. 2) Ms. مقلِف. 3) Ms. الخيشية. 4) Ms. وجده.

5) Ms. ونال. In a marginal note Goldziher suggests the reading ونال instead of وقال. This change seems to me to necessitate reading من in place of فى. I have adopted both emendations. If the reading of the Ms. is retained, we must suppose that a passage has been lost here; a supposition which may seem to be supported by the absence of the name (Zuhair) in what immediately follows.
6) Something missing here?

7) This name is wanting in the Ms., but fortunately the following lines are very well known as belonging to Zuhair; Arnold, *Mo'all.* p. 78, Ahlw. 95, Nöldeke, *Die Mo'allaga Zuhair's*, pp. 16, 30, etc.; see also my *Commercial Terms in the Koran*, p. 10.

8) Ms. فينتقم.

قال الاصمعي سئل شيخ عالم عن الشعراء فقال كان الشعر في
الجاهلية في ربيعة وصار في قيس ثم جاء الاسلام فصار في تميم قلت
للاصمعي لم لم يذكر اليممن [قال]¹⁾ انما اراد بنى نزار فاما هؤلاء
كلهم فاذا تعلموا من راس الشعراء امرئ القيس وانما كان الشعر
5 في اليممن وقال ابي الدنبا مثل فرسان قيس وشعراؤهم²⁾ الفرسان
فذكر عدة منهم عنتره وخفاف بن ندبة وعباس بن مرداس ودريد
بن الصمة وقال لى مرة دريد وخفاف اشعر الفرسان حدثني الاصمعي
[قال]³⁾ ذهب امية بن ابي الصلت في الشعر (fol. 9) بعامة ذكر
الآخرة و[ذهب عنتره ب]عامة⁴⁾ ذكر الحرب وذهب عمر بن ابي ربيعة
10 بعامة ذكر النساء⁵⁾ قال الاصمعي لقي رجلا كثير عزة وهو كثير بن
عبد الرحمن الخزاعي ابن ابي جمعة فقال له يا ابا صخر اى الناس
اشعر قال الذى قال

آثرت اِدلاجى على لَيْلِ حُرَّةٍ هَضِيمِ الخُشَا حُسَانِ المُنَجَّرِ⁶⁾

وهذا للحطيئة قال ثم تركه حينما حتى اذا ظنه قد نسي
15 ذلك لقيه فقال يا ابا صخر اى الناس اشعر قال الذى يقول

قفا نَمِكِ مِنْ ذِكْرِى حَبِيبٍ وَمَنْزِلِ⁷⁾

يعنى أمرا القيس وهو أول من بكى الديار وسير⁸⁾ الظعن قال
الاصمعي انعت الناس لمركوب من الابل عيينة⁹⁾ بن مرداس وهو
الذى يقال له [ابن]¹⁰⁾ فسوة وانعت الناس فُحْلُوب في انقصيد الراعى
20 وانعتهم فُحْلُوب في الرجز ابن لَجَا التيمى¹⁰⁾ واسمه عمر قال الاصمعي

1) Ms. omits. 2) Ms. وشعراؤهم. 3) Bracketed words om. in Ms.

4) This saying also quoted from al-Aṣmaʿi in Agh. III, 188, below.

5) Dīwān, Cairo 1323, p. 21; ed. Goldziher, ZDMG. 46, 203; Agh.

II, 61; Lisān, s. v. دلج.

6) The opening line of Imrulqais' Muʿallaqa.

7) Ms. وسير. 8) Ms. عتيبة. 9) Ms. om. 10) Ms. السمي.

أَيُّ النَّاسِ أَشْعَرُ قَبِيلَةَ قَبِيلِ النَّجَلِ الْعَمِيُونِ فِي ظِلَالِ الْفَسِيلِ يَعْنِي
الانصار قال ويقال الزرق العميون في اصول العضاء يعني بنى قيس
بن ثعلبة وذكر منهم المرقش والاعشى والمسيب بن علس حدثنا
الاصمعي قال حدثنا ابن ابي الزناد قال أنشد حسان شعر عمرو
بن العاص فقال ما هو شاعر ولكنه عاقل قال الاصمعي سئل الاخطل
عن شعر كثير فقال حجازي يكيد¹⁾ البرد قال الاصمعي يوما أشعرت
ان ليلى اشعر من للنساء وقال لى مرة الزريقان فارس شاعر غير
مطيل وقال مالك بن نويرة شاعر فارس مطيل قال ليس في الدنيا
قبيلة على كثرتها اقل شعرا من بنى شيبان وكتب قال وليس لكلب
شاعر في الجاهلية قديم قال وكتب مثل شيبان اربع مرار حدثنا ابو
حاتم قال حدثنا الاصمعي قال قيل لحسان من اشعر الناس قال
اشعرهم (fol. 10) رجلا ام قبيلة قيل²⁾ قال بل قبيلة قال هذيل
قال الاصمعي فيهم اربعون شاعرا مقلعا³⁾ وكلهم يعدو على رجله
ليس فيهم فارس قال ابو حاتم سالت الاصمعي فمن اشعرهم رجلا
واحدا قال اما حسان فلم يقل في الواحد شيئا وانا اقول اشعرهم
واحدا النابغة الذبياني وهو ابن خمسين سنة وانما قال الشعر
قليلًا وقال النابغة للجعدى اُحِمَّ ثلاثين سنة بعد ما قال الشعر ثم
نبغ قال والشعر الاول من قوله جيد بالغ والآخر كله مسروق وليس
جيد قال ابو حاتم قال الشعر وهو ابن ثلاثين سنة ثم اُحِمَّ ثلاثين
سنة ثم نبغ فقال ثلاثين سنة قلت للاصمعي كيف شعر الفرزدق
قال تسعة اعشار شعره سرقة قال واما جرير فله ثلاثون قصيدة ما
علمته سرق شيئا قط الا نصف بيت قال لا ادري لعله * وافق
بني شيئا قلت ما هو هجاء فلم يخبر⁴⁾ قال ابو حاتم قد رايت

1) inserted here in Landberg's hand. See note on the Translation.

2) Ms. قال.

3) Ms. معلقا.

4) This passage is queried in the Ms. The text is corrupt, and it may be that something is missing.

انا بعد في شعره قال ابو حاتم حدثنا الاصمعي قال اظن¹⁾ جميل
بن مَعْمَر ولد في الجاهلية قال والاحوص مؤتد نبت بقاء حتى هم
حدثنا الاصمعي قال قال فلان انما كثير كُرْبَجٍ يعنى صاحب كرج
قال يبيع الخيط والقطران قال الاصمعي كان ابو ذؤيب راوية ساعدة
5 وشذ²⁾ عليه في اشياء كثيرة * فذكر في قافية والّج في شعرهم³⁾ قال
واستجاد هذه للجيمية لابي ذؤيب قال ليس في الدنيا احد يقوم
لشماخ في الزائفة والجيمية الا ان ابا ذؤيب اجاد⁴⁾ في جيميته حدّا
لا يقوم له احد قال هي التى قال فيها
بَرَكَ من جُدامَ لَبِيحٍ⁵⁾

10 قال الاصمعي قال النمر بن تَوَلَّب جاهلى اسلمى قال وقال
الفرزدق للنوار امراته كيف شعري من شعر جرير فقالت شَرَكَكَ⁶⁾
في حلوه وغلبك على مرّه قال الاصمعي قال سمعت ابا سفيان بن
العلاء يقول قلت لرؤبة كيف رجز ابي (fol. 11) النجم عندك⁷⁾
فقال كلمته تلك عليها لعنة الله لانه استجاده
15 الحمد لله الوُحوبُ المُجَزَلِ⁸⁾

حدثنا الاصمعي قال الكميت بن زيد ليس بحجة لانه مؤتد
وكذلك الطرمّاح قال وذو الرمة حجة لانه بدوى ولكن ليس يشبه
شعره شعر العرب ثم قال ألا واحدة التى تشبه العرب وهى التى
يقول فيها

والبابُ دُونَ اَبى غَسَّانَ مسدودٌ
20 تم والله اعلم

٢

1) Ms. ظن. 2) Ms. وشذ. 3) The passage cannot be right as it stands. It is queried in the Ms. 4) Ms. احاد.

5) Diwān, Yale University Library, Ms. 303, fol. 103a; Haffner, *Texte zur arab. Lexikographie*, 116; *Lisān* s. v. بَرَكَ، جذم، شيب، ضرع، لبج؛ *Yāqūt* I, 852, III, 244.

6) Ms. شَرَكَكَ. 7) Ms. عبيدك. 8) Agh. IX, 81, 10.

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The curse of Allah is upon this phrase of his, because *he* thought it excellent:

Praise to Allah, the bountiful giver.

Al-Aṣmaʿī said, moreover: Al-Kumait ibn Zaid was not normative
5 (كُمَيْتٍ), because he was an Arab only by adoption; the same was true of aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ. Dū 'r-Rumma was normative, for he was a bedawī. His poetry, however, is not like the poetry of the true Arabs; excepting (he added) one poem in which he resembles them; that one, namely, in which he says:

10

And on Abū Ghassān the door is barred.

ancient poet in the Jāhiliya, and yet Kalb was four times as good as Saibān.

Said Abū Ḥatim: We have the following from al-Aṣma'i. Some one asked of Ḥassān: Whom do you call foremost in poetry? He answered: (fol. 10) Do you mean What man? or What tribe? I meant the tribe. Ḥudail is the foremost, he replied. (Said al-Aṣma'i: There were in that tribe forty notable poets. They were all men who ran on foot, not one of them was a knight.) Said Abū Ḥatim: I asked al-Aṣma'i: What one man, then, was the foremost of the poets? He replied: Ḥassān did not express his opinion as to the individual, but I will give mine. The one greatest of them all was an-Nābigha of Dubyān, when he was fifty years of age. Nor did he compose much poetry. As for an-Nābigha al-Ja'dī, on the other hand, the flow of his poetry was stopped for thirty years after his first productive period, and then the stream flowed again. The poetry of his first period was extremely good, but all his later productions were unoriginal (مسرودق) and of poor quality. (Said Abū Ḥatim: He began composing poetry when he was thirty years old; then he ceased for thirty years; then the flow was renewed for thirty years more.) I said to al-Aṣma'i: How about the poetry of al-Farazdaq? He replied: Nine tenths of his poetry was borrowed. As for Jarīr, he composed thirty *qaṣida's*, and I do not know that he ever plagiarized anything except one half-verse.¹⁾ According to Abū Ḥatim, al-Aṣma'i said: I think that Jamīl ibn Ma'mar was born of a slave mother; he flourished in Qubā' until his old age.

This from al-Aṣma'i: Some one once said of Kuṭayyir that he was a small shop selling thread and tar. Said al-Aṣma'i: Abū Du'aib was an excellent authority, and many instances of exceptional usage were based on his poetry.²⁾ He (al-Aṣma'i) admired this *jīm*-poem by Abū Du'aib; No one in the world, he said, could equal aš-Šammāh in his poems in *zāy* and *jīm* except Abū Du'aib, who in his poem in *jīm* reached such a limit of excellence as no other could equal; namely, in the poem containing the words:

The kneeling camel herd of Juḏām.

Said al-Aṣma'i: an-Namir ibn Taulab flourished both in the Jāhiliya and in Islam. He also narrated: Al-Farazdaq once said to his wife, Nawār: How does my verse compare with that of Jarīr? She answered: He equalled you in the sweet, and conquered you in the bitter. Al-Aṣma'i said further: I heard Abū Sufyān ibn al-'Alā' say that he once asked of Ru'ba: What do you think of the *raǧaz*-poetry of Abū 'n-Najm? (fol. 11) He replied:

1) The text seems to be defective here, and I have left a passage untranslated.

2) See the note on the text.

I heard this from al-Aṣmaʿī: Umayya ibn Abū ʿs-Ṣalt was supreme and unapproached in poetry (fol. 9) which had for its subject the world to come; 'Antara, where the subject was war; and 'Umar ibn Abū Rabī'a, where the subject was women.

- 5 According to al-Aṣmaʿī, some one once met Kutayyir, the lover of 'Azza (this was Kutayyir ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, al-Ḥuzāʿī, Ibn Abū Jum'a), and said to him: O Abū Ṣaḥr, who was the greatest poet? He answered: The one who said:

- I count my night ride better than a night with one free-born,
10 Slender of waist, most beautiful where stripped of clothing.

Now this was a verse of al-Ḥuṭai'a's¹⁾. Thereupon he left him for a while, until he thought he had forgotten the incident; then he met him again, and said: O Abū Ṣaḥr, who was the greatest poet? He answered: The one who said:

- 15 Stand, let us weep at the remembrance of a beloved one and
her abode;

meaning Imrulqais, who was the first of the poets to depict weeping over deserted dwelling-places and the journeying of the howdas.

- Said al-Aṣmaʿī: The best at describing riding-camels was
20 'Uyaina ibn Mirdās (the one who was called Ibn Faswa²⁾); for description of milch-camels, the best in the *qaṣida* form was ar-Raʿī, and in *rajaz* verse Ibn Laja' at-Taimī (whose name was 'Umar). Said al-Aṣmaʿī: What tribe or company of men ranked highest in the poetry it produced? Some say, The large-eyed ones in the
25 shady palm-gardens, meaning the Anṣār; others say, The blue-eyed ones at the root of the thorn-bushes, meaning the Banī Qais ibn Ta'labā; and he mentioned of their number al-Muraqqiṣ, al-A'ṣā, and al-Musayyab ibn 'Alas. Said al-Aṣmaʿī: I heard the following from Ibn Abū 'z-Zinād. Ḥassān [ibn Tābit] heard some one recite
30 verses by 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣī, and said: He is no poet, but a man of sharp wit. Said al-Aṣmaʿī: Al-Aḥṭal was asked about the poetry of Kutayyir, and replied: A Hijāzite, who fastens the cloak firmly³⁾. Al-Aṣmaʿī once said: Do you know that Lailā was a better poet than al-Ḥansā'? And he said to me on another occasion: Az-
35 Zibriqān was a poet-knight (فارس شاعر) who did not make a long story; Mālik ibn Nuwaira, on the other hand, was a poet-knight who did make a long story. No tribe in the world, he said, was less productive of poetry, in proportion to its number, than the Banī Ṣalbān and Kalb. In the latter tribe there was not a single

1) The same story in different form, and on other authority, in Agh. II, 61. See also the anecdote there, at the bottom of the page.

2) See especially Agh. XIX, 143.

3) What the phrase (يكك البرد) means here, I do not know. It evidently puzzled Landberg also; see the note on the text.

‘Ḥiṭam of the Wind’). Ibn Mufarrigh was one of the *muwallads*¹⁾ of Baṣra. Al-Aṣmaʿī narrates that he heard the following from Wahb ibn Jarīr ibn Ḥāzim. My father once said to me: I was wont to recite three hundred *qaṣida*’s of Umayya. I asked: Where is the collection now? He replied: Such-a-one borrowed it and 5 carried it off.

Said al-Aṣmaʿī: It used to be said that the best of all the poets were “the Vanquished of Muḍar”, namely Ḥumaid, ar-Rāʿī, and Ibn Muqbil²⁾. As for ar-Rāʿī, he was vanquished by Jarīr, and also by Ḥanzar, one of the Banī Bakr. Lailā of Abḡal over- 10 came al-Jaʿdī, and so also did Sawwār [ibn Auf] ibn al-Ḥayā³⁾. Ibn Muqbil was beaten by an-Najāṣī, one of the Banī ʿl-Ḥarīṭ ibn Kaʿb⁴⁾. As for Ḥumaid, every one who attacked him vanquished him. Ibn Aḥmar⁵⁾ (said he) did not satirise any one. Fushūm⁶⁾ was mentioned by him as a notable poet of the Jāhiliya, but he 15 did not give his lineage. He said of an-Najāṣī ibn al-Ḥarīṭiya: He was guilty of wine-drinking, and ʿAlī ibn Abū Ṭalīb punished him by beating with a hundred stripes; eighty for drunkenness, and twenty for violating Ramaḍān (for he had found him drunk in the sacred month). So when he had been beaten, he went away to 20 Muʿāwiya, and composed verse in praise of him, and vituperated ʿAlī⁷⁾.

Said al-Aṣmaʿī: [Zuhair] became intimate with certain Jews, and learned from them about the resurrection. Therefore he said in his *qaṣida*: 25

Either it is postponed, put down in a book, and stored

For the Day of Account; or else ʿtis hastened, and soon avenged.

Said al-Aṣmaʿī: A learned ṣāliḥ was asked about the poets, and replied: In the time before Muḥammad, poetry flourished first in Rabīʿa; then it went over to Tamīm. I said to al-Aṣmaʿī: Why 30 did he not mention Yemen? He replied: He was only speaking of the Banī Nizār; as for these, they all learned the poetic art from Imrūlqais, the chief of the poets; Yemen was the home of poetry. And he said: Are there any in the world equal to the knights of Qais? their poets were indeed the *fursān*. Then he 35 mentioned a number, among them ʿAntara, Ḥufaf ibn Nadba, ʿAbbās ibn Mirdās, and Duraid ibn aṣ-Ṣimma. On another occasion he said to me: Duraid and Ḥufaf were the best poets of the *fursān*⁸⁾.

1) Arabs by adoption, not of pure blood. Generally meaning one born of a slave mother.

2) The name of Nābigha Jaʿdī seems to be accidentally omitted here; see just below.

3) Agh. IV, 131, 6 from bottom, 132f.

4) *Kāmil* 187, 6.

5) *z. e.* ʿAmr ibn Aḥmar al-Bāhilī, another of the poets of Muḍar.

6) So pointed in Ms. I have found no other mention of him.

7) See the note on the text.

8) Cf. the similar estimate given above, and see the Introduction.

Said Abū Ḥatīm: I asked al-Aṣmaʿī about al-Quḥaif al-ʿĀmirī — who made verses about women — and he said: His diction is neither classically elegant nor normative¹). Upon my asking him about Ziyād al-Aʿjam, he said: He is normative; no solecism has
 5 been attached to him; and his *kunya* was Abū Umāma. I said: Tell me about the slave of the Banī ʿl-Ḥaṣḥās²). He replied: His verse was classically elegant, though he was a negro. Abū Dulāma was also a slave, I think he was the adopted son of an Abyssinian. I asked: Was his poetry classically chaste? He replied: It was
 10 of good quality in this regard. Moreover, Abū ʿAṭā as-Sindī was a slave whose ear was pierced. Was he then one of the genuine Arabs?, I queried. No, but his diction was chaste. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān once said to Aiman ibn Ḥuraim of Asad: What do you think of my *maulā*? meaning Nuṣaib. Aiman answered: He
 15 is a better poet than any other man of his skin (for he was a negro)³). Furthermore, ʿUmar ibn Abū Rabīʿa was the son of a slave mother, yet his poetry was considered normative; I have heard Abū ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAlā cite it as proof of correct grammatical usage, and formally declare it to be such. Also Faḍāla ibn Ṣarīk
 20 of Asad, and ʿAbdallāh ibn az-Zubair of the same tribe, and Ibn ar-Ruqayyāt⁴), these all were sons of slave parents, yet their verse is normative. I saw, however, that he disparaged al-Uqaiṣir, and did not feel inclined toward his poetry; he said of him: He was only the “policeman” poet. Yes, I answered, it was al-Uqaiṣir who said:

25 You see, he ’s drinking at our own expense!

So ask the policeman, Wherefore all this wrath?⁵)

He was slave-born, al-Aṣmaʿī continued. Ibn Harma was both reliable and elegant in his compositions; Ibn Uḡaina was reliable, and in the same class (طَبَقَة) as Ibn Harma, but was inferior to
 30 him in his poetry⁶). Mālīk cited traditions on his authority, in his jurisprudence. Ṭufail of Kināna is also to be classed with Ibn Harma. Yazīd ibn Ḍabba was a *maulā* of the tribe Taqīf. He composed a thousand *qaṣida*’s, but the Arabs divided them up and carried them off.

35 Al-Aṣmaʿī said, moreover: After Ruʿba and Abū Nuḡaila (fol. 8) there were no poets more worthy of the name than Jandal aṭ-Ṭuhawī and Abū Ṭauq and Ḥiṭām al-Mujāṣīʿī (who was nicknamed

1) More exactly: to be used as proof (بَدَل) of correct usage.

2) *i. e.* Suhaim.

3) The whole anecdote is given in Agh. I, 131.

4) *i. e.* ʿUbadallāh ibn Qais ar-Ruqayyāt.

5) The story of al-Uqaiṣir’s adventure with the policeman is told in Agh. X, 87f., 91. According to the latter passage, the officer of the law, who had come to arrest al-Uqaiṣir for drunkenness, was himself made tipsy by wine which the poet supplied to him by means of a tube passed through the key-hole of the barricaded door.

6) Cf. Agh. IV, 113, 2f.

I asked him about Ḥidāš ibn Zuhair al-ʿĀmirī, and he replied: He is a *fahl*.

Ka'b ibn Zuhair ibn Abū Sulmā?

Not a *fahl*.

Zaid al-Ḥail aṭ-Ṭā'ī?

One of the *fursān*.

Sulaik ibn as-Sulaka?

Not one of the *fuḥūl*, nor was he one of the *fursān*. He belonged to the number of those who used to make forays, running on their own feet and taking plunder. Another of the same sort 10 was Ibn Barrāqa of Hamdān¹⁾, and still others were Ḥājjiz²⁾ aṭ-Ṭumālī, of the *Sarwīyyūn*³⁾, and Ta'abbāṭa Šarran (whose name was Ṭābit ibn Jābir), and aš-Šanfarā al-Azdī, the *Sarwī*. Al-Muntašir was not of their number, but al-A'lam of Ḥudail belonged to them. Some of them dwelt in the Ḥijāz, and in the Sarāt there 15 were more than thirty (i. e., those who used to run on their own feet and take plunder).

He also said: If Salāma ibn Jandal had accomplished somewhat more, he would have been a *fahl*. Al-Mutalammis is the chief *fahl* of Rabī'a. Duraid ibn aš-Šimma is one of the *fuḥūl* among 20 the *fursān*. Moreover, Duraid in some of his poetry surpasses Nābiga of Dubyān in the art; he did, indeed, come near to vanquishing the Dubyānī.

I said: How about A'šā of Bāhila, is he one of the *fuḥūl*?

He answered: Yes, and there is an elegy of his which has 25 not its equal in the world, namely:

There has come to me a report, at which I am not rejoiced,
From the height; a report in which there is neither lie nor
mockery.

..... (fol. 7) He proceeded⁴⁾: Al-ʿAjjāj was born in the Jāhi- 30 liya. Ḥumaid al-Arqaṭ used to prune and polish and purify the *rajaz* poetry. I saw that he (al-Aṣma'ī) pronounced some of Abū n-Najm's *rajaz* verse good, and some of it defective, for he composed much that was bad. On one occasion he said: I am not much impressed with a poet whose name is al-Faḍl ibn Qudāma 35 (meaning Abū n-Najm).

1) *Kāmil* 152, 19, Yāqūt III, 300.

2) Cf. Agh. XII, 49 below.

3) Those whose home was in the Sarāt, a mountainous district of Tihāma bordering on Yemen, whose inhabitants were noted for purity of speech (Yāqūt III, 66 f.: *قال أبو عمرو بن العلاء أفصح الناس أهل السروات*). See just below, also Yāqūt III, 65 ff. (p. 65 line 8, for *أرمينية* read *اليمن*?), Hamdānī ed. Müller, pp. 48 f., 67 ff.

4) Something missing here?

Faḥl.

Abū Hīrās of Hudail?

Faḥl.

Aṣā of Hamdān?

- 5 He is one of the *fuḥūl*, though of Islām, and the author of much poetry¹).

I asked al-Aṣmaʿī about Kaʿb ibn Saʿd al-Ghanawī; and he answered: He is not one of the *fuḥūl*, except in his elegies; in that particular no other has equalled him. He added: He used to
10 be called "the Kaʿb of the Proverbs".

I asked him also about Ḥufāf ibn Nadba. and ʿAntara, and az-Zibriqān ibn Badr; and he replied: These are the best poets of the *fursān*²); and in the same rank with them is ʿAbbās ibn Mirdās of Sulaim (he did not say that they were of the *fuḥūl*), and Bišr
15 ibn Abū Ḥāzim. I heard Abū ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAlā say: His (Bišr's) *qaṣida* rhyming in the letter *r* brought him into the company of the *fuḥūl*:

Ah, the horde has departed, without drawing near,
And thy heart, borrowed from thee, is in their howdas.

- 20 (Said Abū Ḥatim) I proceeded: What of al-Aswad ibn Yaʿfur an-Nahṣalī?

He replied: He resembles (يُشَبِّهُ) the *fuḥūl*.

Then as to ʿAmr ibn Ṣaʿs al-Asadī, what do you say regarding him? (fol. 6).

- 25 He is not a *faḥl*, but is below that rank.
And Labīd ibn Rabīʿa?

No *faḥl*. Moreover, on another occasion al-Aṣmaʿī described Labīd to me as "a good man" — as though he intended to deny to him any high merit as a poet. And he once said to me:
30 Labīd's poetry is like a mantle from Ṭabaristān; meaning that it was well woven, but without elegance.

He said also: Jarāda ibn ʿUmaila al-ʿAnazī composed some poems which resemble those of the *fuḥūl*, but they are short. This verse is one of his:

- 35 How wert thou led aright, when thou hadst no guide?
There are those who witness against thee what thou didst.

What of Aus ibn Ghalfāʿ al-Hujaimī?

If he had composed twenty *qaṣida*'s, he would have joined the *fuḥūl*; but he is cut short of it.

- 40 He also said to me: ʿUmair ibn Ṭāriq al-Yarbūʿī was one of the chiefs of the *fursān*; he it was who took captive Qābūs ibn al-Mundir³).

1) See the Introduction.

2) See the Introduction, and cf. Agh. XVI, 139, where Ibn Sallām's ranking of Ḥufāf in the "fifth class" of the *fursān* is mentioned.

3) Namely, at Ṭihfā. Bekrī 452, Yāqūt III, 519.

before al-Aḥṭal or after him, do not believe him. Then he said: Abū ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAlā also used to prefer him (to the other two); I have heard him say: If al-Aḥṭal had lived but one single day in the Jāhiliya, I would not give any poet, *jāhili* or *islāmi*, the precedence over him¹). Said al-Aṣmaʿī: I once recited to Abū ʿAmr⁵ ibn al-ʿAlā a certain poem, and he said: No one of the Islamic poets could equal this, not even al-Aḥṭal.

Said Abū Ḥātim: I also asked him about al-Aghlab, whether he was a *fahl*, among the *rajjaz* poets; and he said: He is not a *fahl* nor even successful, and his verse wearies me. And on another¹⁰ occasion he said to me: I only hand down from al-Aghlab two poems and a half. I said: What do you mean by the 'half'? He replied: I know two poems of his, and I used to hand down half of the one which rhymes in *qāf* — for they have lengthened it. And he continued: His children were wont to add to his poems,¹⁵ until they spoiled them. Said Abū Ḥātim: Iṣḥāq ibn al-ʿAbbās²) asked from him a *rajjaz* verse of al-Aghlab, and he sought from me³) I loaned him he brought forth about twenty (poems). (fol. 5) I said: Did you not declare that you knew only two and a half? He answered me: Yes, but I have sorted those²⁰ which I know, and so far as they are not his, they belong at least to others who are classically valid and trustworthy. Said Abū Ḥātim: No other man could recite so many *rajjaz* verses as al-Aṣmaʿī. I once heard a man of Najrān who had travelled about in the regions of Khorasān question him, saying: Such-a-one in²⁵ Rai told me that you could recite twelve thousand *rajjaz* poems. Yes, he answered, there are fourteen thousand *rajjaz* poems which I hold in my memory. I was amazed at this, but he said to me: Most of them are short. I said: Deliver them, verse by verse, fourteen thousand verses. But he answered: Only the poetry of³⁰ al-Aghlab makes the task too tiresome for me. (Said Ḥalaf: One of the sons of al-Aghlab was a man who was trustworthy in the matter of tradition and narrative, but lied about his father's poetry.)

I proceeded: What of Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭāʿī?

Ḥātim, he answered, is only counted as "noble" (يَعْتَبَرُ بِكَرَمٍ);³⁵ he did not say that he was a *fahl*.

And Muʿaqqir al-Bāriqī, the *ḥalīf* of the Banī Numair?

If he had completed five or six *qasida*'s, he would have been a *fahl*. Then he added: The two tribes least productive of poetry seem to have been Kalb and Ṣaibān.⁴⁰

Abū Duʿaib of Hudail?

Fahl.

Sāʿida ibn Juʿayya⁴)?

1) The same in Agh. VII, 172, 8.

2) The governor of Baṣra.

3) The text is defective here.

4) This well known poet does not receive mention in Agh., if the Index is to be trusted.

If he had composed five *qaṣida*'s like the one which we have, he would have been a *fahl*.

And al-Muhalhil?

No *fahl*; but if he had produced other poems like that one of his:

O night of ours in Dū Juṣam, turn to daylight!

he would have been the foremost *fahl* of them all. Besides, the most of his poetry is merely attributed to him.

Abū Duʿād?

10 Excellent¹⁾. (He did not say that he was a *fahl*.)

Ar-Rāʿī?

Not a *fahl*.

Ibn Muqbil?

Not a *fahl*.

15 Said Abū Ḥatim: I also asked al-Aṣmaʿī which of the two was the greater poet, ar-Rāʿī or Ibn Muqbil. He replied: How near to each other they stand! But, I objected, this answer does not satisfy us. Thereupon he said: The verse of ar-Rāʿī was more like that of the old and primitive poets.

20 Ibn Aḥmar (fol. 4) al-Bāhilī?

Not a *fahl*; yet, though inferior to those, he stands at the head of his own division. And (he said) in my opinion (أرى أن)

Mālik ibn Ḥarīm al-Hamdānī is of the *fuḥūl*. If Taʿlaba ibn Šuʿair al-Māzinī had written five poems like his *qaṣida*, he would have
25 been a *fahl*.

How about Kaʿb ibn Juʿail?

I think that he (كان) is of the *fuḥūl*, but do not feel certain of it.

What do you say of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq and al-Aḥṭal?

30 These, if they belonged to the Jāhiliyya, would have a distinguished place (in this ranking); but since they belong to Islām, I will say nothing about them.

Said Abū Ḥatim: I had often heard him prefer Jarīr to al-Farazdaq; so I said to him, on the day when ʿIṣām ibn al-Faiḍ
35 came to see him: I wish to ask you about something, and if ʿIṣām had already heard it from you, I would not ask. I have heard you prefer Jarīr to al-Farazdaq, more than once; what will you say now about the two, and about al-Aḥṭal? So he reflected for a moment, and then recited a verse from his (al-Aḥṭal's) *qaṣida*:

40 Verily I have made the night's journey of no weakling,

On a she-camel emaciated of cheek and thin of flank.

Then he recited about ten verses more, and said: If any one tells you that any man on earth ever produced the equal of this, either

1) صالح.

Fahl.

Al-Ḥārīt ibn Ḥilliza?

Fahl.

'Amr ibn Kulṭūm?

No *fahl*.

5

Al-Musayyab ibn 'Alas?

Fahl.

How about 'Adī ibn Zaid; is he a *fahl*?

Neither stallion nor mare!

(Said Abū Ḥātim: The only reason why I asked him was 10 because I had heard Ibn Munādir¹) say that no poet should be ranked higher than 'Adī.)

What of Ḥassān ibn Ṭābit?

He is a *fahl*.

Qais ibn al-Ḥaṭīm?

15

Fahl.

The two named al-Muraqqiṣ?

Each of the two is a *fahl*.

And Ibn Qamī'a?

Fahl. (This was Qamī'a [ibn Darīḥ]²) ibn Sa'd ibn Mālik, 20 and his *kunya* was Abū Yazīd³)).

And Abū Zubaid?⁴)

He is no *fahl*.

Aš-Šammāḥ?

Fahl. (And al-Aṣma'i added: I have talked with a man who 25 had seen the grave of aš-Šammāḥ in Armenia.)

How about Muzarriḍ, his brother?

He was not inferior to aš-Šammāḥ, yet he injured his poetry by introducing too much satire.

Now al-Aṣma'i had told me, before this, that the men of Kūfa 30 were wont to place al-A'šā in the very first rank of poets⁵); also, Ḥalaf⁶) was accustomed to say that no poet should be ranked above him. (Said Abū Ḥātim: This was because he composed poetry in every sort of meter, and used every variety of rhyme.)

I proceeded: What of 'Urwa ibn al-Ward?

35

He answered: He was a noble poet (شاعر كريم), but not a *fahl*.

How about al-Ḥuwaidira?

1) Muḥammad ibn Munādir (often Manādir), Agh. XVII, 9 ff.

2) Agh. XVI, 163.

3) There was another Ibn Qamī'a of some note, namely he who killed Mus'ab ibn 'Umar at the battle of Uhud, mistaking him for the Prophet Muḥammad (Hiš. 566 f., Agh. XIV, 19). This Qamī'a was of the Laṭī tribe.

4) Harmala ibn al-Mundir aṭ-Ṭā'i.

5) Apparently, the original context of this passage is to be found above, where al-A'šā was mentioned; see also the note on the text.

6) Cf. Agh. VIII, 78, where al-A'šā is under discussion, and Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar refuses to decide the question of superiority.

They are compelled to have the sharp bit of the bridle put on,
As if it were put on the trunk of a palm that is stripped of
its bark¹).

(You say: I constrained him (*rāwadtuhū*) to this or that, meaning
5 the same as *ḥāwadtuhū*, and one may say also *aradtuhu*. Here he
is describing the neck of the animal)

. . . . and he [*i. e.* an-Nābigha *al-Jaʿdī*] was most excellent in
describing horses²). Thereupon he recited:

10 Holding firm the sutures of the skull, or he had been ready to
neigh³).

He also excelled in that *qaṣīda* of his in which he says:

Those 'generous gifts' of yours — not even two cups of milk,
Which were made gray with water, and at last turned to urine.

15 (Said Abū Ḥātim) I asked: What was his intent in that, for this
line enters into the verse of another poet⁴). He replied: When
Sawwār [ibn Aufā] ibn al-Ḥayā' al-Quṣairī said: 'We have among
us him who searched for his foot⁵), him who made Ḥājib his
captive, and those who gave the milk to drink', an-Nābigha there-
20 upon composed the verse: (fol. 3)

Those generous gifts of yours — not even two cups of milk.

Said al-Aṣmaʿī: If this *qaṣīda* had only been written by the
older Nābigha, it would have reached the utmost bound of merit.

I then asked him: How about al-Aʿšā, the Aʿšā of the Banī
25 Qais ibn Taʿlaba?

He replied: He is not a *fahl*⁶).

And 'Alqama ibn 'Abada?

1) See Krenkow, loc. cit., p. 870.

2) On the lacuna here, see the note on the text.

3) It is perhaps useless to attempt to translate without knowing the con-
text. On the شَوْن of a horse, see Ibn Sīda's *Kitāb al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* VI, 138,
and on أَرَادَ لِيُزْفِرَ see Jamhara, 147, lines 4f.

4) See Brockelmann, loc. cit., p. 118, where the story of the verse is
told, and the original author is said to have been Abū 's-Ṣalt ibn ar-Rabī'a
at-Taqaṭī.

5) Namely Ḥubāṣ ibn Qais, whose foot was cut off in the battle of the
Yarmūk, while he was showing great valor; see especially Belādūrī 137, where
the verse is given:

وَمِنَّا ابْنُ عَتَابٍ وَنَاشِدُ رَجُلَيْهِ وَمِنَّا الَّذِي أَتَى إِلَى لَحْيٍ حَاجِبًا

The Ḥājib who was made captive was Ḥājib ibn Zurāra. The story of his
capture by Mālik ibn Salama (known as Dū 'r-Ruqaiba) is told in Agh. X, 42f.

6) This judgment is all the more remarkable in view of the high esteem
in which Abū 'Amr held al-Aʿšā (Agh. VIII, 78, etc.). On the probable dis-
arrangement of the Ms. at this point, see below.

the comparison of the two¹⁾ He answered: No; Abū 'Amr²⁾, when some one asked him, in my hearing: Was an-Nābigha, or Zuhair, the greater poet? replied: Zuhair was not worthy to be an-Nābigha's hireling. He (al-Aṣma'ī) added: Aus ibn Ḥajar was a greater poet than Zuhair, but an-Nābigha took away from him 5 some of his glory³⁾. Aus composed this:

With an army for which you see the field too strait,
in a poem of his; but an-Nābigha followed it with some lines of
his own, bringing its conceit, and something besides, into a single
half-verse: (fol. 2) 10

An army, for which the field becomes too strait,
Leaving the ridges behind as though they were plains⁴⁾.

Abū Ḥātim also reported from al-Aṣma'ī the following: A
ṣaiḥ of the people of Najd said that Ṭufail al-Ghanawī used to be
called *Muḥabbir*⁵⁾, in the pre-Islamic time, because of the beauty 15
of his verse. And in my own opinion, said al-Aṣma'ī, in some of
his poetry he surpassed Imrūlqais; al-Aṣma'ī says it. Then he
added: And yet Ṭufail borrowed something from Imrūlqais; more-
over, it is said that much of the poetry of Imrūlqais belonged to
certain beggars⁶⁾ who attached themselves to him; also, 'Amr ibn 20
Qamī'a went in his company to the Byzantine court⁷⁾. Mu'āwiya
ibn Abū Sufyān used to say: Summon for me Ṭufail, for his verse
is more like that of the ancient poets than is the verse of Zuhair,
and he is a *fahl*⁸⁾. Al-Aṣma'ī proceeded: It is a wonder that
an-Nābigha never gave any description of a mare except in the 25
one verse:

With her nostrils yellow from [the blossoms of] the *jarjār* plant.
Indeed, an-Nābigha, Aus, and Zuhair were not wont to give fine
descriptions of horses; but Ṭufail, on the contrary, reached the
almost bound of excellence in this characterization, and he was a 30
fahl. Then he recited these lines of his:

1) See note on the text. 2) Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā', † 154/770.

3) Cf. Brockelmann, *Nöldeke-Festschrift*, p. 117 above.

4) That is, they were trampled flat by the multitude of the army.

5) Literally, one who adorns. See especially Goldziher's discussion of
the uses of this term, *Abhandlungen*, I, 129—131.

6) "Poor devils", صعاليك.

7) Agh. XVI, 163, 166 above, and elsewhere.

8) The question of al-Aṣma'ī's dating of the poet Ṭufail (see Krenkow,
JRAS. 1907, pp. 815, 820) is here settled. The *original* meaning of the
statements quoted by Krenkow from Agh. XIV, 88 must have been simply this,
that Ṭufail was older than Nābigha *Ja'dī* (with whom he is all the time being
compared), and the foremost (أقدم) of the poets of Qais 'Ailān.

Translation.

Al-Aṣma'i's Ranking of the Earliest Arabian Poets.

- Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Duraid al-Azdī reports the following from Abū Ḥatīm Sahl ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Utmān 5 as-Sijzī. Said Abū Ḥatīm: On more than one occasion I heard al-Aṣma'ī 'Abd al-Malik ibn Quraib pronounce an-Nābigha of Dubyān superior to the other pre-Mohammedan poets. I myself also asked him — and it was the last question that I put to him, only a short time before his death — Who stands first among the *Fuḥūl*? 10 He replied: an-Nābigha of Dubyān; but added: In my opinion, no one ever equalled the verses of Imrulqais:

Their good fortune guarded them through their kinsfolk —
It is on the less fortunate that vengeance falls!

- Said Abū Ḥatīm: When he saw that I was writing down what 15 he said, he reflected for a moment and then proceeded: No, the first of them all in excellence is Imrulqais; his were the highest honor and the precedence, and they all drew upon his poetry and followed his canons; I could almost say that he gave an-Nābigha of Dubyān his place among the *fuḥūl*. Then I asked (said Abū 20 Ḥatīm): What is the meaning of the term *fuḥl*?¹⁾ He replied: It means that one has a marked superiority over his fellows, like the superiority of a thoroughbred stallion over the mere colts; and he added: it is the same thing which is meant by the verse of Jarīr:

- 25 The young offspring of the milch-camel, when he is fastened
with the yoke-rope,
Can not withstand the fierce attack of the seasoned and mighty
ones²⁾.

- Said Abū Ḥatīm: Some one asked him, Who of all men is 30 the greatest poet? He answered, an-Nābigha. The other continued: Do you give no one the precedence over him? He replied: No, nor were the men of learning in poetry whom I have known accustomed to prefer any one to him. But, I said, there has been some difference of opinion in regard to Zuhair ibn Abū Sulmā and

1) Of course such a slightly different use of the term as that illustrated by the title *Alqama al-Fuḥl* (on its origin, see Agh. XXI, 173) would suggest

itself; cf. also the definition given in the *Lisān*: *فُحُولُ الشُّعْرَاءِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا بِالْهَجَاءِ مَنْ هَاجَاهُمْ مِثْلَ جَرِيرٍ وَالْفَرَزْدَقِ وَاشْبَاعِيْمَا وَكَذَلِكَ كَلَّ مِنْ عَارِضٍ شَاعِرًا فَغَلَبَ عَلَيْهِ*.

2) More exactly: the *ibn labūn* is a camel entering upon his third year; the *būzil* (plur. *buzul*) is eight or nine years old.

in a passage which is not found in our text of the work, though it might perhaps have stood there originally. I print in square brackets the portion which is wanting in the Landberg manuscript.

اخبرنى محمد بن الحسن بن دريد قال حدثنا ابو حاتم قال سألت
5 الاصمعى عن اعشى همدان فقال هو من الفحول وهو اسلامى كثير
الشعر [ثم قال لى العجب من ابن دأب حين يزعم ان اعشى
همدان قال

مَنْ دَعَا لى غَزِيلِي اَرْبَحَ اللّٰهُ تِجَارَتَهٗ

ثم قال سبحانه الله أمثل هذا يجوز على الاعشى أن يجزم اسم
10 الله عز وجل ويرفع تجارته وهو نصب ثم قال لى خلف الاحمر
والله لقد طمع ابن دأب فى الخلافة حين ضن ان هذا يقبل منه
وان له من التحل مثل ان يجوز مثل هذا ثم قال ومع ذلك ايضا
أن قوله * من دعا لى غزيلي * لا يجوز انما هو * من دعا لغزيلي *
Ibn Duraid reports from Abū Ḥatim: I

asked al-Aṣmaʿī about Aʿšā Hamdān, and he said: He is one of 15
the *fuḥūl*, though of Islām, and the author of much poetry. [He
(al-Aṣmaʿī) continued: One can only wonder at Ibn Daʿb when he
asserts that Aʿšā Hamdān was the author of this:

*Man daʿā lī ghuzayyilī ʿArbaḥ allāh tijāratuh*¹⁾.

God forbid that this sort of thing should be allowed to pass 20
as perpetrated by al-Aʿšā, that he should pronounce the word
“*Allah*” with the *sukān*, and put “*tijāratuh*” in the nominative
when it should be in the accusative! Thereupon Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar
said to me: Verily, Ibn Daʿb must have been aspiring to the caliphate
when he imagined that this would be accepted from him, and that 25
his place was so high that such an assertion as this could pass.
Then he added: Moreover, even the first half-verse, *man daʿā lī
ghuzayyilī*, is not permissible; it can only be, *man daʿā lighu-
zayyilī*, as one says, *man daʿā libaʿirīn dāllīn*”²⁾].

In the text which follows, the Landberg manuscript is faith- 30
fully reproduced, except in a very few cases where good reason
for deviation is given in the notes at the foot of the page. The
vowel-pointing is usually that of the ms. itself.

1) That is: Whoever calls for me my little gazelle, may God make his
trading profitable.

2) That is: Who summons (its owner) to a straying beast (which has been
found); cf. *Liṣṣin* XVIII, 285 (above), etc.

other words. His use of the designation *fursan* is another illustration of the fact that he is not concerned with the terminology of a thoroughgoing literary classification. He speaks of these Arab "knights" of old as we might speak of the knights of the middle
 5 ages, or of the Troubadours. They were invested with an atmosphere of nobility and chivalry, and men like al-Aṣmaʿi spoke of them with an enthusiasm which was only in part based on approval of their poetical achievements. "Those who made predatory excursions *on foot*" form another class, a less distinguished group than
 10 that of the "knights", numbering such men as Taʿabbata Ṣarran and aṣ-Ṣanfarā; and here again the classification was not primarily concerned with rank in the art of poetry. Thus it appears, for instance, that the two classes, *fahl* and *fursan*, are not mutually exclusive. Duraid ibn aṣ-Ṣimma is mentioned as belonging to both
 15 groups (دريد بن الصمة من فحول الفرساء), and the same possibility is implied in other passages.

It is obvious, from all this, that al-Aṣmaʿi's *fuḥūlat as-Suʿarāʾ* could not serve as the basis for subsequent systematic essays on the rank of the poets. It was both too indefinite and too arbitrary,
 20 besides seeming to put too many poets in the very foremost rank. It was not of any great use to later writers to have this unwieldy classification into *fahl* and no-*fahl*, where the opinions even of those best qualified to judge differed so widely, and the line between the two classes was often impossible to draw (as al-Aṣmaʿi himself
 25 confesses over and over again). If there was to be any ranking at all, it must be something better than this. Of course every scholar who undertook a thoroughgoing criticism of the Arab poets would be influenced by these judgments, and would usually either quote or adopt them to some extent; in a few cases, however, the
 30 estimate was too obviously one-sided to find general approval, as when the two lesser Aʿšās, of Hamdān and Bāhila, are classed among the *fuḥūl*, while the great Aʿšā is left out. The importance of the compilation is simply that of the "table talk" of a noted
 35 scholar, on a subject in which he was rightly regarded as a high authority. We may all be grateful to Abū Ḥatim for having followed his master about with a note-book.

The text of the work, as we possess it in our unique manuscript, is in fairly good condition, though there are a few doubtful passages and one or two disturbing lacunae. So far as it is possible to
 40 judge from internal evidence, the gaps are not extensive. It may be, moreover, that what we have is a somewhat abridged form of the original compilation; though this can only be called a possibility, not really made probable by the evidence. In one passage preserved in the *Aghānī* (V, 158), Ibn Duraid cites from Abū
 45 Ḥatim, from al-Aṣmaʿi, an opinion which is given in the same words in our *كتاب فحول الشعراء*, and then continues the citation

the beginning of these "memoirs" is characteristic and significant. Abū Ḥātim had asked his master to name the foremost *fahl* of all the poets, and the answer had been, Nābigha Ḍubayānī. "But", says Abū Ḥātim, "when he saw that I was writing down what he said, he reflected for a moment, and then proceeded: No, the first of them all is Imrulqais", etc. In one place, in speaking of the "knights" of the pre-Muhammadan time, he says that Ḥufaf, 'Antara, and az-Zibriqān were the best poets of the *fursān*; but on another occasion he names Duraid and Ḥufaf as the best of the group. There are several other patent examples of inconsistency. An anecdote which he tells here of the poet Kutayyir really serves to illustrate the off-hand manner in which many of his own judgments were expressed. Some one asked of Kutayyir who was the greatest poet, and received the answer, al-Ḥuṭai'a. The questioner then waited for some time, until he thought it likely that the poet had forgotten the incident, and then asked the same question again; this time receiving the answer, Imrulqais. For a considerable part of the material here collected by Abū Ḥātim, we cannot be confident that it gives us what al-Aṣma'ī himself would have written down as his final estimate, in a serious attempt to rank the Arab poets. We can hardly doubt, on the other hand, that al-Aṣma'ī has been faithfully reported by his pupil; the question of the substantial genuineness of the compilation can hardly arise.

The scientific value of the treatise, as a specimen of literary criticism, is small. It is quite plain that the great philologist had not made any careful study of the criteria according to which poets were to be excluded from, or admitted to, his *fahl* class. It is also evident that he had no system of successive classes, in which he ranked those whom he would not reckon among the *fuḥūl*. In speaking of the poets who fell below the highest rank, he used a variety of complimentary terms, more or less at haphazard, and without showing any purpose of making even a rough classification. Goldziher, in his above-mentioned essay, seems to me to go too far when he says (Abhandl. I, 137): "Al-Aṣma'ī hat sogar einen neuen Terminus festgestellt, durch welchen er, gleichsam in schonender Weise, hochberühmte Dichter der Ḡahilīja aus der Ordnung der eigentlichen Klassiker entfernt, ohne damit ihren Werth völlig herabzusetzen. Er nennt diese Dichter zweiter Ordnung:

karīm, edel". Goldziher then cites the cases of Ḥātim (أَنَا يُعَدُّ) and 'Urwa (شاعر كريم وليس بفاحل). But 40 this, I think, reads into al-Asma'i's words more than he intended. He had no thought of a definite *second class*, in which the term *karam* was used in the same way as *fuhūla*. It was only by accident that he employed the adjective *karīm* in these cases; on another day, speaking of the same poets, he might have chosen 45

at some length the work before us, the *تحولة الشعراء* of al-Aṣmaʿi, which he had been able to use while the manuscript was still in Landberg's possession. To his treatment of the subject the reader is accordingly referred. Again, Brockelmann in the *Nöldeke-Festschrift*, I, 109—125, has published a conspectus of one of the earliest and most important of the *fuḥūla* books, the *طبقات الشعراء* of Muḥammad ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī († 231), making use of all the surviving fragments of the work which he was able to collect. This is a systematic treatise on the ranking of the poets, and therefore altogether different from the compilation of Abū Ḥātim, as will presently appear. Finally, we are promised a complete edition of this treatise of al-Jumāhī in the near future, by Professor Hell of Munich, who has found a manuscript containing it in the Khedivial Library in Cairo; see his announcement in the ZDMG. 64, p. 659, note.

As has just been said, the remarks on the poets made by al-Aṣmaʿi, and collected by Abū Ḥātim as-Sijistānī under the title *Kitāb Fuḥūlat as-Šuʿarāʾ*, do not constitute anything like a systematic compilation. What we have is simply a catena of scattered sayings, of very uneven value, made on many different occasions, and thrown together without any plan of arrangement. Some of the judgments were given in answer to questions, while others (and these constitute the great majority) were the merest *obiter dicta*. The opinion expressed is in many cases confined to this one point, the fitness of the poet to bear the title *fahl*, that is, "thoroughbred male" (especially male camel), or "stallion", a truly Arabian way of picturing the embodiment of pure native blood, masculine force, and high spirit. The holder of this rank must have been, first of all, a poet of very noteworthy achievements; thus it is said of al-Ḥuwaidira, for example: "If he had produced five *qaṣidas* like the one which we have, he would have been a *fahl*". But he must also have been a true representative of the genuine Arab stock at its best, embodying the qualities which were most characteristic of the free and vigorous life of the native clans, battling for their precarious existence on the edge of the desert. As Goldziher remarks (loc. cit., p. 135): "Nicht die dichterische Kraft allein macht den Menschen dieser Benennung würdig; diese bezieht sich vielmehr auch auf die Eigenschaften des ritterlichen Charakters". It is easy to see why the poets of the Islamic time were not easily given the title which seemed to belong by especial right to the primitive period and the Bedawī nobility. Al-Aṣmaʿi's estimates, both as to the *fuḥūla* quality and also on other matters concerning the old poets, while always interesting are frequently not convincing. Some are evidently the fruit of long deliberation; others are so carelessly made that we may suspect that al-Aṣmaʿi himself would have modified or even retracted them a few days later, when he was in another mood. One of the incidents narrated near

Al-Aṣmaʿī's Fuḥūlat aš-Šuʿarāʾ.

By

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A brief treatise, purporting to contain al-Aṣmaʿī's detailed estimate of the pre-Mohammedan poets, has been known to exist in a single manuscript in Damascus. The attention of occidental scholars was first called to it by H. Lammens, in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1894, II, p. 155. The manuscript was copied for Count 5 Landberg while he was in the East, and the copy, which is now in the library of Yale University, as number 49 of the Landberg Collection purchased in 1900, furnishes the text which is here published. The original manuscript, which is said to be about two hundred years old, contains also the *Diwān* of Muḥammad ibn 10 az-Zayyāt († 233), Taʿlab's *Qawāʿid aš-Šiʿr*, and the *Šajarat ad-Durr* of ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn ʿAlī († 351).

The form of the *كُتُبُ فُحُولَةِ الشُّعْرَاءِ* is that of a loose series of personal reminiscences. The narrator is al-Aṣmaʿī's favorite pupil Abū Ḥātim Sahl ibn Muḥammad as-Sijistānī, who reports 15 from his master, verbatim, whatever he had heard him say — either of his own accord or in answer to questions, at various times — as to the relative merits of the ancient poets. Abū Ḥātim's narrative is transmitted, finally, through his own pupil, the renowned scholar Ibn Duraid, who is thus responsible for the redaction which 20 lies before us.

The whole subject of *fuḥūla* literature has been treated so often that there is no need of general discussion here. Nöldeke, in his *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der alten Araber*, 1 ff., translated and commented upon the Introduction to a work of this 25 nature by Ibn Qutaiba; and much that is contained in that treatise may profitably be compared with this older compilation, unlike as the two are. Goldziher, in his *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie* I, 122—174, has given us a characteristically thorough essay on "Alte und neue Poesie im Urtheile der arabischen Kritiker", 30 in which he discusses the principal criteria on which the earliest Muhammadan critics based their estimates. Moreover, in pp. 134—143 he deals with the term *fahl* in particular, and characterizes